

GEO 358

Animals and Society

Professor: Bob Wilson

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Office Hours: Fridays, 1:00-2:30pm

Or by appointment

Overview

This course examines the relations between animals and society in the United States from a historical and geographical perspective. Unlike a course on animals or zoology in the life sciences, this course draws primarily on approaches from the humanities and social sciences. Some of the questions we will address include: What is the history of our relationship with animals? How have we developed places for animal production and consumption such as feedlots and slaughter houses, zoos, wildlife refuges, pet stores, and even our homes? How has race, class, and gender affected our uses of and attitudes towards animals? And, in the words of Hal Herzog, how have we decided which animals to love, hate, or eat?

Evaluation

10% Class Attendance and Participation

10% Reading Quizzes and Short Reading Responses

15% Field Report

15% Movie Review

30% Research Paper

20% Final Exam

Class Participation

Attending lectures and participating in class discussions are essential aspects of this course. To give you a sense of my expectations for class participation, I offer the following guidelines:

The **A** student reads all the material beforehand and demonstrates a clear understanding of the key aspects of the text. She is able to answer questions posed by the professor, but more importantly, she has developed her own questions and comments about the text. She speaks regularly without dominating the discussion. She also listens carefully to what her classmates say and builds on their contributions.

The **B** student more or less reads the material, though not very carefully. He understands the 'gist' of the article or chapter, but when pressed, he has difficulty assessing the implications of the text. He is an infrequent contributor to discussion. In general, this student participates from time to time, but is mostly content to let others do most of the talking and critical thinking.

The **C** student demonstrates little evidence of doing the reading and she rarely, if ever, speaks. However, she attends regularly.

The **D** or **F** student never talks, shows no evidence of doing the reading, and may also miss classes. Basically, this student is a pain-in-the-behind. ☹

*** You must bring the day's assigned readings to class. If you don't have the readings and we discuss them, I will mark you as absent.*

Reading Quizzes and Short Reading Responses

During the semester, I will give pop quizzes on the readings and assign short responses for the readings. I will not announce the pop quizzes beforehand. The quizzes will consist of 3 or 4 questions on the readings. If you have read the material carefully, these quizzes should be very easy.

I may also assign two-page response papers on the readings. I will alert you about these in advance. The due dates of these short papers are not noted on the syllabus. They should not take you long to complete. Their main purpose is to encourage you to reflect carefully and think critically about what you read so we can discuss it in class.

Field Report

You will write a five-page field report about a place devoted to animals based on a visit to a big-box' pet store (i.e., PetCo) *or* the Rosamond Gifford Zoo. I'll distribute a detailed handout about the assignment in mid-September.

Film Review

Television shows and films are some of the main ways Americans learn about and experience other animals. We will discuss animals in popular culture later in the course. After doing so, you will write a five-page review and analysis of a film about animals. I'll distribute a detailed handout about the assignment in mid-October and provide a list of suitable films.

Research Paper

The major assignment for the course is a 10-page research paper due at the end of term (Monday, November 19th). I'll distribute a detailed handout about the assignment in late October.

Exam

There will be an exam on the last day of class (*not* during exam week) Wednesday, December 5th worth 20% of your final grade. It will cover *all* the material associated with the course: lectures, readings, films, and discussions. It will likely include some mixture of key terms, short answers, and an essay.

Academic Integrity

Cheating in any form will not be tolerated, nor is assisting someone to cheat. The submission of any work in this class is taken as a guarantee that the thoughts and expressions are the student's own unless properly cited. Breaking this policy on exams, essays, or other assignments will, at a minimum, result in a failing grade for an assignment and likely a failing grade for the course. For more information, see the student section of the university's web site about academic integrity (<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/>).

This is what the university obliges me to tell you. This is my own simple take on the matter: plagiarize a paper or cheat on an exam and you will fail. Period. Other professors may let issues of academic dishonesty slide or let you off with a warning. I am not one of those professors.

Religious Observances

SU's religious observances policy, found at http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may

be missed due to a religious observance *provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes*. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through MySlice/Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class.

Student Athletes

Some of you are student athletes. Athletics is an important part of your time in college, and I will do my best to accommodate your travel schedules.

Typically, your coaches or another official associated with the team or athletic department will give you a letter explaining your status and a list of your away games. Once you receive this material, make sure to give me a copy. We can then discuss how you can make-up missed lectures and assignments in a timely fashion.

Students with Disabilities

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Laptops, Tablets, Smart Phones, and Texting

Given the ubiquity of wireless connections to the Internet on the SU campus, there is a great temptation to multi-task and surf the web during class. Therefore, I do not allow the use of laptops or tablets (ipads, etc.) during lectures or discussions. The use of smart phones, iPhones, Blackberries, and other texting devices is prohibited, too.

However, you *may* use an E-reader such as the Kindle or Nook.

Students texting during class will have their participation grade lowered ½ a letter grade for the first two infractions; further infractions will result in an ‘F’ for participation in the course. Please let me know if you have a medical reason for needing to use a laptop or other screen-based device that Disability Services has authorized.

Readings

Coleman, Jon. *Vicious: Wolves and Men in America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004.

Herzog, Hal. *Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat: Why It's So Hard to Think Straight About Animals*. New York: Harper, 2010.

Wilson, Robert M. *Seeking Refuge: Birds and Landscapes of the Pacific Flyway*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010.

All of these books are available at the SU Bookstore. You can probably find cheaper copies of these books from Amazon or other online retailers.

Course Schedule

(BB) – reading available on Blackboard

Week One

Mon., 8/27 Introduction

Animals: Some we Love, Some we Hate, Some we Eat

Wed., 8/29 Animal Histories & Geographies

Readings

Herzog, *Some We Love*, 1-14.

Cartmill, Matt. "The Bambi Syndrome." *A View to a Death in the Morning: Hunting and Nature through History*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993. (BB)

** read the Cartmill chapter *after* Thursday's class. **

Week Two Animals in Early America

Mon., 9/3 ** No Class. Labor Day **

Wed., 9/5 Creatures of Empire and Commodifying Animals

Readings

Anderson, Virginia de John. "King Philip's Herds: Indians, Colonists, and the Problem of Livestock in Early New England." *William and Mary Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1994): 601-24. (BB)

White, Richard. "Animals and Enterprise." In *The Oxford History of the American West*, edited by Clyde Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor and Martha A. Sandweiss, 236-73. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. (BB)

Week Three Predators: Those We Hate(d)

Mon., 9/10 Extermination: Laying Waste to Predators in Early America

Readings

Coleman, *Vicious*, Introduction, 1, 3

Wed., 9/12 The Fall and Rise of Wolves, Grizzlies, and other Predators

Readings

Coleman, *Vicious*, 5, 9, and "Reintroduction"

Week Four Nature on Display: Animals in Zoos and Theme Parks

Mon., 9/17 From Menageries to Zoos

Readings

Kisling, Jr., Vernon N. "The Origin and Development of American Zoological Parks to 1899." In *New World, New Animals: From Menagerie to Zoological Park in the Nineteenth Century* edited by R. J. Hoage and William A. Deiss, 109-25. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996. (BB)

Wed., 9/19 Spectacular Nature & Theme Parks (or unraveling the riddle of Shamu)

Readings

Davis, Susan G. *Spectacular Nature: Corporate Culture and the Sea World Experience*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997 (BB)

Week Five **Pets: Those We Love**
 Mon., 9/24 Dominance and Affection: The Creation of Pets

Readings

Herzog, *Some We Love*, 67-96.

Wed., 9/26 Making Fido: Breeding and Pet Production

Readings

Herzog, *Some We Love*, 97-128.

Week Six **Nature's Ghosts: Wildlife Extinction and Conservation**
 Mon., 10/1 Wildlife Decline and Extinction
 ** Field Trip Report Due **

Readings

None.

Wed., 10/3 Conserving Wildlife

Readings

Price, Jennifer. "2: When Women were Women, Men were Men, and Birds Were Hats." *Flight Maps: Adventures with Nature in Modern America*. New York: Basic Books, 1999. (BB)

Week Seven **Seeing Like a State: Wildlife, Refuges, and Management**
 Mon., 10/8 Hunting, Parks, and Refuges

Readings

Wilson, *Seeking Refuge*, Foreword, Introduction, chapters 1 (skim) & 2

Wed., 10/10 Managing Wildlife

Readings

Wilson, *Seeking Refuge*, chapters 3, 4, 5 (skim), Conclusion

Week Eight **Reel Nature: Animals on Film and T.V.**
 Mon., 10/15 True-Life Adventures: The History of America's Romance with Wildlife on Film

Readings

Mitman, Gregg. "Foreword: Nature Screened" and "Disney's True-Life Adventures." *Reel Nature: America's Romance with Wildlife on Film*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009 [1999]. (BB)

Wed., 10/17 The New Green Wave: Wildlife in Contemporary Popular Culture

Readings

Bouse, Derek. *Wildlife Films*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, 4-36. (BB)

Week Nine Gender and Animals

Mon., 10/22 Gender and Animals

ReadingsHerzog, *Some We Love*, 129-148.Urbanik, Julie. "Hooters for Neuters: Sexist or Transgressive Animal Advocacy Campaign?" *Humanimalia* 1, no. 1 (2009) <http://www.depauw.edu/humanimalia> .

Wed., 10/24 Gender and Animals II

Readings

To be announced.

Week Ten Industrializing Animals

Mon., 10/29 From Cows to Beef

**** Film Review Due ****Readings

None.

Wed., 10/31 From Chickens to Poultry

ReadingsPollan, Michael. "Power Steer." *The New York Times Magazine*, March 31 2002.<http://michaelpollan.com/articles-archive/power-steer/>Emel, Jody, and Roberta Hawkins. "Is It Really Easier to Imagine the End of the World Than the End of Industrial Meat?" *Human Geography* 3, no. 2 (2010). (BB)**Week Eleven Animals in the Lab**

Mon., 11/5 Animal for Research & Animal Testing

ReadingsHerzog, *Some We Love*, 205-236.Wed., 11/7 Film: *Project Nim* (2011)Readings

None. Work on your research papers!

Week Twelve

Mon., 11/12 Emotional Lives of Animals

Discuss *Project Nim*Readings

To be announced.

Wed., 11/14 ****No class. Finish your research papers. ******Week Thirteen**

Mon., 11/19 Animal Liberation?

**** Research Paper Due ***Readings

None.

Thur., 11/21 The Case for and Against Vegetarianism

ReadingsHerzog, *Some we Love*, 237-262.Pollan, Michael. "An Animal's Place." *The New York Times Magazine*, 10 November 2002.<http://michaelpollan.com/articles-archive/an-animals-place/>**Week Fourteen**Mon., 11/26 **** No classes. Thanksgiving Break. ****Wed., 11/28 **** No classes. Thanksgiving Break. ****Readings

None.

Week Fifteen

Mon., 12/3 A History and Place for Animals

Wed., 12/5 ****Final Exam****